



ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



VANDERBILT
Office of Postdoctoral
Affairs

YEAR IN REVIEW

The past academic year has included tremendous growth in the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA). After the uncertainty associated with the pandemic and leadership changes, we were able to evaluate and determine what resources and programming were missing from the postdoc experience and how to fill in the gaps.

The year brought a return to in person events after a year of virtual offerings. We held the postdoc family picnic at Dragon Park as part of National Postdoc Appreciation Week. The 15th annual postdoc symposium was organized by the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association and took place at the Student Life Center on November 1. Another event was a holiday luncheon in early December as a time to gather, relax, and enjoy a good meal leading into the winter break.

In the Spring semester, OPA and the English Language Center worked to bring a series of English language modules to the entire Vanderbilt community – something that was unavailable to postdocs at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) previously. In May, a policy was put in place, in partnership with the Biomedical Research Education and Training (BRET) office and the VUMC Office of Research, for

VUMC postdocs to acquire dual identity. This allows VUMC postdocs to access Vanderbilt University resources more easily. Finally, we had the first in-person standalone postdoc awards ceremony and reception recognizing outstanding postdoctoral research, mentorship, and service as well as faculty mentorship.

We welcomed to campus more than 170 new postdocs in the 2021-2022 academic year and held twelve new postdoc orientations. We had more than 25 administrative training meetings to support the administrative staff that works with postdocs and 20 support meetings with faculty or postdocs to support our postdoc community.

**We are your OPA, and we
are working on your behalf**



The 2022 Spring Postdoc Awards Reception took place in Alumni Hall.

Postdoc Appreciation Family Picnic at Dragon Park.



LOOKING FORWARD

We will continue to bridge the gap between Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt University Medical Center to provide resources for the entire postdoctoral community. Further, our efforts will continue to build programming for international postdocs including working with the Immigration offices in VU and VUMC and the English Language Center. We will continue to fill gaps that are missing from the postdoc experience across the University and Medical Center.



Neelima Wagley, Ph.D., Vice Provost
Christie-Mizell, and Harry Barbee, Ph.D.



The 15th Annual Postdoc Symposium had 26 poster presentations over two poster sessions.



Dr. Adia Harvey
Wingfield was the
keynote speaker
for the 15th Annual
Postdoc Symposium.

OPA

LEADERSHIP

2021-2022



C. André Christie-Mizell
Director



Faith Bishop
Associate Director



Annie Evans
Program and Communications Manager



Caitlin Haskell
Program and Communications Manager



Carl Fritscher
Program Coordinator

VPA BOARD MEMBERS

2021-2022



Brianna Yamasaki
Senior Co-Chair



Kakali Ghoshal
Social Activities and
Community Building
Chair



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Maxime Chevee
Postdoc Advocacy Chair



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Markie Sneed
Treasurer



Shramana Ghosh
Equity, Diversity, and
Inclusion Chair



Anirban Sengupta
Scholarly Learning Chair



Reanna Roby
Community Outreach
Chair

BY THE NUMBERS

POSTDOC POPULATION

AY 2021-2022

SCHOOL NUMBERS

Blair	1
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Arts and Science	129
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Divinity School	1
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Law School	1
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Owen	6
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Peabody College	39
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School of Engineering	61
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School of Medicine	398
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School of Nursing	2
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TOTAL 638



International **309** | US Citizens **329**

9

SCHOOLS

65

DEPARTMENTS

114

POSTDOCS ON
TRAINING
GRANTS OR
INDIVIDUAL
FELLOWSHIPS



WHAT IS A POSTDOC?

Vanderbilt postdoctoral fellows, commonly known as postdocs, are professionals who have earned doctoral degrees and are, in most cases, temporarily pursuing additional scholarly training, experience and research progress necessary for a wide range of career paths.

Postdocs play an important role in Vanderbilt's research enterprise and are integral to the discovery and learning mission of Vanderbilt University and Medical Center. At any given time, **Vanderbilt has around 450 postdocs across both VU and VUMC.**



MISSION

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is responsible for planning and managing programs and services for Vanderbilt's postdoctoral community. OPA supports Vanderbilt-affiliated postdocs as well as faculty and staff administrators who work with the postdoctoral population. OPA is the central resource for postdoctoral services and serves as a liaison among postdocs and central university administrative offices. OPA also works closely with the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association, formally known as the Postdoctoral Association, to address the interests and concerns of postdocs.

EVENTS

2021-2022

<h3>2021</h3>	<p>Sept 29</p> <p>OPA New Postdoc Orientation Refresher for Department Admins and SPOCs</p>
<p>Jul 12</p> <p>Postdoc Wellness Workshop: Building Resilience for Postdocs</p> <p><i>OPA/Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration</i> <i>Presenter: Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-EAP</i></p>	<p>Oct 1</p> <p>Peak Performance: Managing Conflict and Relationships in Academic</p> <p><i>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</i></p>
<p>Sept 7</p> <p>Peak Performance: Perfectionism and Imposter Syndrome</p> <p><i>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</i></p>	<p>Oct 6</p> <p>Assertiveness & Boundary Setting Workshop for Postdocs Collaboration with Project Safe</p> <p><i>Presenter: Cara Tuttle, Director of Project Safe</i></p>
<p>Sept 20-24</p> <p>National Postdoc Appreciation Week</p> <p>Sept 20 Wellness Workshop: Dealing with Change OPA/Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration <i>Presenter: Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-EAP</i></p> <p>Sept 21 Professional Headshots & Postdoc Appreciation Picnic</p> <p>Sept 22 Professional Headshots</p> <p>Sept 23 Coffee with OPA Leadership</p>	<p>Oct 7</p> <p>VUEDGE Social Justice Panel: Using your Scholarship as a Voice to Promote Social Justice</p> <p><i>Co-sponsored by The Vanderbilt Graduate School's Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education Program, The Graduate School, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, Office for the Vice-Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Peabody College Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Fisk-Vanderbilt Master-to-PhD Bridge Program, Organization of Black Graduate and Professional Students</i></p>
<p>Sept 22</p> <p>J1 Visa Insurance Information Session</p> <p><i>Collaboration with ISSS and Aetna</i></p>	<p>Oct 12</p> <p>Critical Conversations: Managing Up</p> <p><i>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</i></p>

Oct 14

What to Expect When Applying for Non-Academic Jobs

Career Center

Oct 15

Peak Performance: Motivation, Mindset & Effective Goal Setting

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Oct 22

English Language Center - Postdoc Workshop

English Language Center

Oct 29

Peak Performance: Performing Under Pressure, Fighting Procrastination & Increasing Efficiency

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Nov 1

Annual VPA Symposium



Nov 5

Career Connections: Alumni Perspective on Navigating the Job Search (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Career Center

Nov 8

Postdoc Wellness Workshop: Holiday Stress

*OPA & Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration
Presenter: Stephanie Dean from Work/Life Connections-EAP*

Nov 12

Peak Performance: Finding Work/Life Balance

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Career Connections: Alumni Perspective on Navigating the Job Search (STEM)

Career Center

Dec 6

Postdoc Holiday Luncheon



Dec 10

ELC Postdoc Workshop

Strategies for effectively communicating with your advisor and mentor; resources for balancing productivity and mental health while managing postdoc responsibilities; general tips for making the most of your postdoc years

English Language Center

2022

Jan 24

Postdoc Wellness Workshop: Chasing the Elusive Work/Life Balances

*OPA & Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration
Presenter: Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-EAP*

Feb 11

English Language Center International Workshop Series (Session 1)

English Language Center

Feb 15

CliftonStrengths for Postdocs (Part 1)

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Feb 28

Demystifying Taxes for Graduate Students and Postdocs Live Q&A Session

Emily Roberts, Finance for PhDs

Mar 1

CliftonStrengths for Postdocs (Part 2)

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Mar 4

English Language Center International Workshop Series (Session 2)

English Language Center

Mar 15

CliftonStrengths for Postdocs (Part 3)

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Mar 22

Introduction to Entrepreneurship

The Wond'ry

Mar 28

The Women's Center Salary Negotiation Workshop

Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center

Apr 1

English Language Center International Workshop Series (Session 3)

English Language Center

Apr 8

Motivation, Mindset & Effective Goal Setting

Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

May 7

Nashville Sounds game for Postdoctoral Fellows

May 16

WriteNow Summer Writing Bootcamps

*Sponsored by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program*

May 24

Spring Postdoc Awards Ceremony

Jun 23

Speak Easy Talk Series Event

*Sponsored by the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association and
the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs*

Markie Sneed, Ph.D., APRN,
FNP-BC presents at the first
Speak Easy event.



THE *SPEAK EASY* TALK SERIES,

hosted by the Vanderbilt Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) and the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association (VPA), seeks to offer a casual venue for “scientific presentations” that are accessible and digestible to the public through an evening happy hour event. *Speak Easy* presenters will discuss a variety of topics from biology, neuroscience, mathematics, data science, health-related science, and more.

The first *Speak Easy* event was held June 23, 2022.



The *Speak Easy* talk series allows postdocs to present their research and network with their colleagues.

NATIONAL POSTDOC APPRECIATION WEEK

September 20-24, 2021

National Postdoc Appreciation Week recognizes the significant contributions that postdoctoral fellows make to U.S. research and discovery. The 12th Annual National Postdoc Appreciation Week was held September 20–24, 2021.



Coffee with the OPA
and Career Center.

EVENTS INCLUDED:

Wellness Workshop: Dealing with Change
*Sponsored by Work/Life Connections –EAP
Postdoc Wellness Program*

Free Cupcakes at the Women's Center
Sponsored by the Margaret Cuninggim
Women's Center

**Coffee with Office of Postdoctoral Affairs
Leadership and Career Center Coaches**
Sponsored by the Office of Postdoctoral
Affairs and the Career Center

**Postdoc Appreciation Annual Family
Picnic**

Complimentary Postdoc Headshots



The Postdoc Family Picnic returned to Fannie Mae Dees Park.

15TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Written by Anirban Sengupta, 2021-2022 VPA Scholarly Learning Chair

The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association hosted the 15th annual Postdoc Symposium on November 1. The symposium was organized in person at the Student Life Center, much to the joy and cheer of the attendees, after having it virtually in 2020 due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The preparation for the symposium started in August after the new VPA committee was formed for the 2020-21 session. The symposium committee was headed by the VPA's Scholarly Learning Chair Anirban Sengupta and Senior Co-Chair Brianna Yamasaki. The planning committee included 10 people from the VPA board and 2 volunteers from the postdoc community along with support from the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. The 15th Annual Postdoc Symposium had a participation of more than 120 people which included attendees, presenters, faculty judges, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs representatives including Vice Provost C. André Christie-Mizell, Provost C. Cybele Raver, and other invited speakers. Dr. Adia Harvey Wingfield, Professor of Sociology from Washington University in St. Louis presided over the event as the Keynote speaker. Her talk focused on "Professional Work in a Post Racial Era", a topic which is of high relevance in present socio-political situation in the United States. We also had a talk on career development by Dr. Ashley Brady from the Biomedical Research Education and Training Office, which was well received by the attendees.



Postdocs presented their research during two poster sessions.



Chitra Basu, Ph.D, Michael Kammer, Ph.D., Brianna Yamasaki, Ph.D., and Harry Barbee, Ph.D. during the symposium award ceremony.

This year we had seven lightning talks and 26 poster presenters from various disciplines across the university and the medical center. Several award winners were recognized:

SYMPOSIUM AWARD WINNERS

BEST LIGHTNING TALK

Harry Barbee (VU)

Sex in a pandemic: how gender affects our adaptations to moments of crisis

Michael Kammer (VUMC)

The tumor immune microenvironment protects against recurrence in early-stage lung adenocarcinoma

BEST POSTER PRESENTATION

Chitra Basu (VUMC)

Gene expression analysis of isolated cardiac endothelial cells at different stages of tissue repair after myocardial infarction

Hubaida Fuseini (VUMC)

High and low leptin doses differentially effect Ki67 and IL-17A expression in CD4+ T cells from obese and lean PWH on long-term antiretroviral therapy

Clément Garin (VU)

An evolutionary gap in primate default mode network organization



Vice Provost and Dean Christie-Mizell addressing the awards ceremony attendees.

2022 SPRING POSTDOC AWARDS CEREMONY

The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs announced its 2022 award winners at the Spring Postdoc Awards Ceremony on May 24.

POSTDOC OF THE YEAR

The Postdoc of the Year award recognizes a postdoctoral scholar who demonstrates excellence in research and scholarship. The nominee must demonstrate excellence in several criteria, including publications, presentations, awards/honors, service, and mentoring. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs solicited nominations from faculty in each school, and the Postdoctoral Fellow Advisory Committee reviewed and voted on all nominations.



This year's recipient is **Harry Barbee, Ph.D.**, supervised by Tara McKay, Ph.D. (Medicine, Health, & Society)

and colleagues Kitt Carpenter, Ph.D. (Economics) and Gilbert Gonzalez, Ph.D., MHS (Medicine, Health, & Society, Health Policy) in the LGBT Policy Lab.

"Few among us can say that we have changed the culture of a government institution through our work, and Harry has been exceptional here," states Dr. Tara McKay.



An honorable mention was awarded to **Abigail LaBella, Ph.D.** mentored by Antonis Rokas, Ph.D.

POSTDOCTORAL MENTOR OF THE YEAR

Recipients of the Postdoctoral Mentor of the Year Award must demonstrate a willingness to share expertise and advice; service to the community at large, including other mentoring activities; and scholarship within the mentor's own career, including publications, awards, presentations and honors. The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association solicits nominations from all Vanderbilt postdocs, and the VPA Executive Board reviews and votes.



This year's recipient is **Neelima Wagley, Ph.D.** mentored by James Booth, Ph.D.

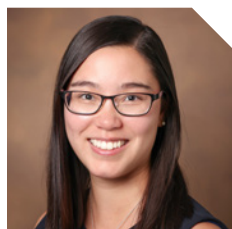
Dr. Wagley is described saying, *"She really values mentorship and wants to help people from all backgrounds to succeed in academics and promote science".*



An honorable mention was awarded to **Nina Hernitschek, Ph.D.** mentored by Keivan Stassun, Ph.D.

POSTDOC SERVICE AWARD

The Postdoc Service Award goes to a postdoctoral scholar who has demonstrated sustained service to Vanderbilt through service to the community at large—through professional societies, scholarly work outside regular lab responsibilities, or by leading within and promoting the postdoc experience at Vanderbilt. The Vanderbilt Postdoc Association solicits nominations from all postdocs, and the VPA Executive Board reviews and votes.



This year's recipient is **Brianna Yamasaki, Ph.D.** mentored by James Booth, Ph.D.

Dr. Yamasaki is the Senior Co-Chair for the VPA for the 2021-2022 academic year. Outside of the university, Brianna has engaged in community outreach events to bridge the gap between the scientific and public communities.



An honorable mention was awarded to **Anirban Sengupta, Ph.D.** mentored by John Gore, Ph.D.

FACULTY MENTOR OF THE YEAR

Recipients of the Faculty Mentor of the Year Award must demonstrate a willingness to share expertise and advice; service to the community at large, including other mentoring activities; and scholarship within the mentor's own career, including publications, awards, presentations and honors. The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association solicits nominations from all Vanderbilt postdocs, and the VPA Executive Board reviews and votes.



This year's recipient is **Erin Calipari, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Pharmacology.

Dr. Calipari is described by a mentee as *"without a doubt, one of the best mentors I have had the pleasure to work with on my academic journey, spanning my undergraduate, graduate (Masters and PhD), and postdoctoral years."*



An honorable mention was awarded to **Adam Wright, Ph.D.**, Professor of Biomedical Informatics.

POSTDOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2021-2022

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Rick Ohmer



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